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BUCKINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and the

SANITARY INSPECTOR

for the Year

1947.

List of Parishes in the Council's Area.

Addington	Marsh Gibbon
Adstock	Middle Claydon
Akeley	Padbury
Barton Hartshorne	Poundon
Beachampton	Preston Bissett
Biddlesden	Radclive-cum-Chackmore
Charndon	Shalstone
Chetwode	Steeple Claydon
Edgcott	Stowe
Foscott	Thornborough
Hillesden	Thornton
Leckhampstead	Tingewick
Lillingstone Dayrell	Turweston
Lillingstone Lovell	Twyford
Luffield Abbey	Water Stratford
Maids Moreton	Westbury

1947.

BUCKINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Chairman of Council :

W. CULLEY, ESQ.

General Purposes Committee.

Chairman :

D. R. JAMES, ESQ.

Members :

Lt.-Col. R. L. Agnew

Mr. W. G. Beckett

Mr. M. W. Bennett

Mr. W. Durrant

Hon. Mrs. M. E. Fortescue

Mr. J. Glendinning

Miss H. M. Hubbard

Hon. Mrs. J. P. Heywood-Lonsdale

Mr. P. Morris

Col. L. Parratt

Mr. A. Powell

Mr. A. J. Rawlings

Mr. A. Shaw

Mr. G. H. Stevens

Mr. A. T. Thorne

Major J. D. Young

Mr. W. Culley and Mr. W. F. Wood, *ex-officios*.

Public Health Staff.

Medical Officer of Health :

D. H. WALDRON,

O.B.E., M.D., D.P.H., D.T.M. & H., Col. I.A.M.S. (Rtd.).

(The Medical Officer of Health is also M.O.H. for
Buckingham M.B., Bletchley U.D.C. and Assistant County
Medical Officer for Bucks C.C.).

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector :

J. C. SHARPE, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

BUCKINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

COUNCIL OFFICES,
SCHOOL LANE,
BUCKINGHAM.

To the Chairman and Members of Buckingham Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for 1947.

The birth-rate shows a satisfactory increase over last year's figures and is much higher than that for Bucks County and England and Wales.

Both the death-rate and infantile mortality rate show slight increases over the 1946 figures. The net increases are 5 and 1 respectively. The infantile mortality rate, although higher than the Bucks County rate, is less than that for England and Wales.

We escaped any serious epidemics during the year although an anxious time was spent during the epidemic of Anterior Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis) which swept the country in the latter half of the year. One case was notified in the district. This case was immediately evacuated to hospital in Oxford and fortunately did not prove serious. Being a school child we were extremely fortunate in that no spread of the disease occurred.

The question of a Maternity Hospital for Buckingham District was re-opened again with the County Authorities during the year but no progress was made due to the lack of suitable accommodation and also difficulties in obtaining both nursing and domestic staffs for even existing institutions.

Since taking up my appointment in June, 1947, I have been most impressed by the great interest taken by Council members at all times in matters affecting the health of the district. I should also like to thank the Council for the courtesy extended to me on my introduction to civil life.

My thanks are also due to Mr. Floyd (Clerk to the Council), Mr. Sharpe (Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector), and their staffs, for their helpful advice, assistance and co-operation at all times.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

D. H. WALDRON.

A. Vital Statistics.

	1947	1946
Area (in acres)	54,543	54,543
Population	7644	7641
Number of Inhabited Houses	2364	2326
Rateable Value	£33,522	£33,353
Rate per £	17/10	15/7½
Sum represented by a penny rate	£145/15/10	£131/1/2

Births:

Legitimate—Males	79	68
„ Females	68	59
Illegitimate—Males	9	6
„ Females	8	6
Birth-rate per 1,000 population	21.4	18.1
„ „ „ (Bucks)	20.1	18.6
„ „ (England & Wales)	20.5	19.1
Deaths—Males	59	54
„ Females	49	49
Death-rate per 1,000 population	14.1	13.4
„ „ „ (Bucks)	11.3	10.5
„ „ (England & Wales)	12.0	11.5
Maternal Mortality Rate	Nil	Nil
„ „ (England & Wales)	1.17	1.06

Infantile Mortality:

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births	36.5	35.9
Ditto for Bucks	30.8	30.1
Ditto for England & Wales	41.0	43.0
Still-births	5	5
Deaths from Measles	Nil	Nil
„ Whooping Cough	„	„
„ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	„	„

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH :	1947			1946		
	M.	F.	T.	M.	F.	T.
Influenza	-	-	-	-	-	-
Respiratory Tuberculosis ...	3	-	3	2	1	3
Other Tuberculosis	-	-	-	1	-	1
Cancer	7	6	13	13	8	21
Diabetes	1	-	1	-	1	1
Cerebral Hemorrhage	8	11	19	5	14	19
Heart Disease	12	16	28	14	6	20
Other Circulatory Diseases ...	1	1	2	2	-	2
Bronchitis	4	2	6	2	2	4
Pneumonia	1	1	2	3	-	3
Other Respiratory Diseases ...	2	-	2	1	1	2
Digestive Diseases	1	-	1	-	1	1
Nephritis	2	2	4	2	1	3
Puerperal Pyrexia and Fever ...	-	-	-	-	-	-
Congenital Causes	2	3	5	2	2	4
Violence	4	-	4	4	2	6
All other Causes	11	7	18	3	9	12
TOTALS	59	49	108	54	48	102

B. General Provision of Health Services.

1. LABORATORY FACILITIES.

Specimens for bacteriological investigation were sent to the Public Health Laboratory, Oxford, as in previous years. Specimens for qualitative and quantitative analysis had to be sent to London. It is hoped that under the new National Laboratory Service, complete examinations will be performed in the same laboratory.

2. AMBULANCE SERVICES.

(a) *Infectious Diseases*.—The ambulance from the North Bucks Joint Isolation Board conveyed cases to the Slade Hospital, Oxford; Isolation Hospital, Aylesbury; and the Fever Hospital at Grove.

(b) *Non-Infectious Cases and Accidents*.—The St. John Ambulance Brigade and British Red Cross Ambulance stationed at Buckingham has dealt with the needs of the district in a most conscientious manner.

3. NURSING FACILITIES.

The District Nurses in the Buckingham Rural Area carried out their duties in their usual conscientious manner.

4. CLINICS.

(a) *Maternity and Child Welfare*.—There are now seven of these Clinics serving Buckingham Rural District, an increase of three over 1946. These are located at:

Buckingham (twice monthly).	Thornborough (once monthly).
Calvert (once monthly).	Tingewick (twice monthly).
Twyford (once monthly).	Winslow (twice monthly).
Steeple Claydon (twice monthly).	

The District Nurse and Health Visitor attended each session and the Medical Officer attended once monthly.

I feel that too much praise cannot be given to those ladies of the voluntary committees who gave so much of their spare time in helping this very excellent work.

(b) *Immunization Clinics*.—Immunization against Diphtheria and also Whooping Cough was carried out at all the above clinics. In addition a special Immunization Clinic is held once monthly at the Bucks C.C. Clinic, 19, Stratford Road, Buckingham.

(c) *Chest Clinic*.—This was organized during the year at 19, Stratford Road, Buckingham. The clinic holds monthly sessions and is under the direct supervision of the County Tuberculosis Officer. It is equipped with a X-Ray plant and is doing excellent work.

(d) *Orthopædic Clinic*.—This clinic is organized by the Wingfield-Morris Hospital Oxford. It holds two sessions a month at the Town Hall, Buckingham, and an Orthopædic Surgeon attends one session.

(e) *Venereal Disease*.—Cases of Venereal Disease in the district have received treatment at the Government Clinics at Oxford, Northampton and Aylesbury.

5. HOSPITALS

(a) *Infectious Diseases*.—Cases were accepted by the following hospitals during the year:—

Slade Hospital, Oxford.
Isolation Hospital, Aylesbury.
Fever Hospital, Grove.

(b) *Tuberculosis*.—Cases were treated at the Berks and Bucks Joint Sanatorium, Peppard.

(c) *General Hospitals*.—General cases were admitted to the following hospitals during the year:—

Buckingham Hospital.
Royal Bucks Hospital, Aylesbury.
Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford.
Northampton General Hospital.
Tindal Hospital, Aylesbury.

C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

1. WATER SUPPLY.

The Bucks Water Board supplied every parish with water. Water main extensions have been carried out at Bufflers Halt in the parish of Water Stratford and a further extension is proposed in the Verney Junction area at an early date. The laying of new mains has had to be largely suspended due to the economic crisis.

(a)	QUALITY—Satisfactory.		
(b)	QUANTITY—Satisfactory.		
(c)	Number of dwelling-houses on main	1678	
	Number of population served	5873	
(d)	Samples taken from other than main supply... ..	7	
	Samples found upon analysis to be unfit	7	

2. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

Most of the water courses and streams throughout the district have been polluted by drainage effluent, and during the year works of cleaning out the Beachampton and Shalstone brooks have been undertaken and completed. A concrete dam with penstock was also erected on the Shalstone brook in order to give flushing facilities to this slow-running water course during the dry season.

The water course running through the village of Thornborough is badly polluted and is a potential danger to the health of the inhabitants.

3. SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

When I took over my appointment with your Council in June, 1947, I was amazed to find that the pre-historic method of bucket latrine and burial in the garden existed in so many parishes in the district.

At the first meeting of your General Purposes Committee which I attended, I heard several schemes, plans for which had had the blessing of all concerned, postponed because of financial implications. At that meeting, the member for Thornborough made a statement with which I am in full agreement. In essence, he queried the advisability of building new housing estates before first ensuring that an essential service such as proper sewage disposal is laid on, not only for new houses, but also for the existing population.

The Council are well advanced indeed with plans for several parishes but I do feel that those schemes already approved should be implemented now.

The Tingewick scheme started late in the year and is expected to be completed during 1948.

The present systems at Marsh Gibbon and Westbury are obsolete and require drastic modification.

The "sewer ditches" which abound in a good number of villages are a potential danger to the public health.

4. WATER CLOSETS.

No conversions to the water carriage system have been carried out by the Council during the year although private individuals have done work of this nature to various properties.

5. PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The quarterly collection of tins, bottles, etc., has been made throughout the district with the aid of an old *Morris Commercial* vehicle. Difficulty was experienced in keeping up to schedule with the collection, due chiefly to frequent mechanical breakdowns. Early in the year the Council placed an order for a new refuse collecting vehicle but this had not been delivered at the end of the year. In November the old vehicle broke down altogether and the Council had to resort to the hiring of a vehicle for this purpose.

It is the Council's intention to give a more frequent service as soon as the new vehicle is delivered and also to provide for the collection of all types of household refuse.

The disposal of refuse is carried out by controlled tipping. Tipping facilities were secured at Calvert on land owned by the London Brick Company from which clay for brickmaking has been excavated. The filling of this excavation will take years to complete and in consequence little difficulty should be experienced in the future regarding this means of disposal. A further tip at Leckhampstead has been in use during the year but will not last very much longer.

The emptying of cesspool and sewage tanks for which the Council are responsible has been carried out as far as labour would allow. This has been carried out by hand pumping and the use of a tumbler cart and horse. The Council hope to alter this arrangement during the coming year by employing a contractor to carry out this work on their behalf with the aid of a mechanical cesspool emptier.

The salvage of waste materials, *i.e.*, waste paper, cardboard, scrap metals, etc., has been carried out concurrently with the collection of refuse. The materials so collected, after being sorted and baled, have been disposed of to merchants.

6. SCHOOLS.

The sanitary condition of some of the village schools in the area is not all that could be desired, but it is hoped to improve the condition in the near future. The restrictions on building and building materials have to a large extent hindered progress in this respect.

7. SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There are no swimming baths in the Rural District area, but various streams, lakes and gravel pits are used for this purpose. A proposal to establish a public swimming bath in Buckingham will benefit those parishes near the town.

8. ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

No cases of infestation were reported during the year. The method employed for free disinfestation from bed bugs is by fumigation and the use of D.D.T.

D. Housing.

During the year the Council has been active with regard to the provision of new houses to meet the needs of the housing shortage. The completion of houses under construction has not been very rapid, but this has been chiefly due to labour and material hold-ups. It is anticipated that much greater progress will be made towards this end during the forthcoming year.

Number of new houses erected and occupied during 1947, other than by Local Authority	...	...	...	6
Number erected by Local Authority (including pre-fabricated houses and bungalows)	...	...	...	58
Number under construction at end of 1947	...	...	...	88
Number of houses found to be in a state unfit for habitation	...	...	...	5
Number of houses in respect of which an undertaking was signed to render the premises fit for habitation	...	...	...	Nil
Number of houses in respect of which an undertaking was signed that the premises owned would not be re-let for habitation	...	...	...	4
Number of houses found to be unfit and upon which a Demolition Order was made	...	...	...	Nil

~~sites~~ ^{sites} In September, 1947, the Council took over hutments on two ~~sites~~ at Finmere Aerodrome which had been occupied by "squatters." The conversion of 16 of these hutments into two separate living units was commenced later in the year, which will provide accommodation for 32 families.

Repairs to houses have been considerably handicapped owing to licensing restrictions and shortage of labour and materials. Notwithstanding these inconveniences, repairs have been carried out, particularly those requiring urgent attention.

RURAL HOUSING SURVEY.

The survey of rural houses, as recommended in the *Hobhouse Report*, is still in progress and by the end of the year 458 houses had been inspected in various parishes. It is hoped to complete this survey during the coming year when additional staff will be available. The houses inspected have been categorized as follows:

Category 1.—Houses satisfactory in all respects	...	...	38
„ 2.—Houses having minor defects only	...	..	82
„ 3.—Houses requiring major repairs and re-conditioning			156
„ 5.—Unfit Houses	...	...	182

No house has been placed in Category 4 owing to the inoperation of grants under the Housing (Rural Workers) Act, but this can be done at a later date, if such legislation is forthcoming.

E. Annual Report of Sanitary Inspector.

I beg to submit a brief report of the work carried out by my Department during the year ended 31st December, 1947.

General Survey of Inspections and Visits during Year.

Total number of premises visited	...	...	1719
Complaints received	...	...	85
Informal notices served	...	...	56
Statutory notices served	...	...	3

Cowsheds and Dairies.

Number of Producers on Register	...	...	326
Inspections	...	...	70
Number of new applications	...	...	4
Contravention of regulations	...	...	24
Improvements carried out	...	...	19

The following Supplementary Licences were issued during the year under the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1936 and 1938, authorising the use of the Special Designations:—

“Pasteurised”	...	...	1
“Tuberculin Tested”	...	...	2

Meat and Other Foods.

Food condemned during the year include the following:—

Meat and Offal	...	...	12 lbs.
Bacon	...	...	30 „
Fish	...	...	126 „
Tins of Meat	...	...	4
„ Milk	...	...	75
„ Tomatoes	...	...	1
„ Soup	...	...	1
„ Fish	...	...	1

Bakehouses.

Number on Register	..	...	...	...	5
Number of Visits	...	...	...	...	4
Contraventions to Regulations	...	...	...	...	2

Factories and Workshops.

Inspections have been made in connection with the above and all complaints received have had attention.

Factories with mechanical power	...	...	...	...	12
Factories without „	„	...	...	...	4
Visits to Factories	...	...	...	...	7
Form 562 completed and submitted to all concerned.					

Tents, Vans and Moveable Dwellings.

Number licensed	...	...	...	...	2
Number of Inspections	...	...	...	...	5
Nuisances found to exist	...	...	...	...	3
Nuisances abated	...	...	...	...	3

Rats and Mice Destruction.

Number of Inspections carried out	...	...	...	...	1129
Total number of Rat infested areas cleared	...	...	...	...	218

Insect Infestation.

A number of premises were cleared of infestations by insects during the year. Complaints were received from tenants of Swedish Timber Houses on various dates concerning nuisances caused by flies. Upon investigation, it was found that flies of the hover type had migrated in the false roofs. The nuisance caused was abated with the aid of D.D.T. Whether the type of timber as supplied in the Swedish Timber Houses has an attraction for such flies remains to be seen.

Drainage.

Number of new drains examined	...	...	...	...	35
Number of visits for that purpose	...	...	...	...	52

Storage of Petroleum Spirit.

Register of Petroleum Licences (December, 1947) :

500 gals. or less	...	...	...	...	18
Over 500 gals. but not more than 1000 gals.	...	...	...	...	4
Over 1000 gals.	...	...	...	...	2
Total Licences issued	...	...	...	...	24

Infectious Diseases.

Number of Visits	...	...	...	...	18
Number of disinfections	...	...	...	...	9
Number of rooms cleansed	...	...	...	...	12

Housing and Building Bye-Laws.

Number of Plans deposited for new houses	...	...	...	...	8
Number of Plans deposited for other works	...	...	...	...	63

Other Classified Visits.

Housing visits under Housing Acts	...	...	65
Housing visits under Public Health Acts	...	...	90
Visits <i>re</i> Water Supply	...	...	19
Visits <i>re</i> Drainage and Sewerage	...	...	87
Visits <i>re</i> Refuse Collection	...	...	45
Visits <i>re</i> Refuse Disposal	...	...	52
Visits in connection with Sewage Disposal	...	...	25
Schools	...	...	6
General Nuisances	...	...	19
Overcrowding	...	...	6
Accumulation of Refuse	...	...	5
Foul Ditches and Ponds	...	...	20
Animals	...	...	2
Unclassified	...	...	25

J. C. SHARPE,
Sanitary Inspector.

F. Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and Other Diseases.**1. GENERAL.**

During the year there have not been any outbreaks of Measles, Whooping Cough or Dysentery. There was one case of Anterior Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis).

2. NOTIFICATIONS.

	M.	F.	TOTAL
Measles	9	3	12
Pneumonia	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	2	6	8
Typhoid Fever	-	-	-
Anterior Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis)	1	-	1

3. CANCER.

Thirteen deaths were caused by this disease.

4. TUBERCULOSIS.

Three persons have died from pulmonary tuberculosis.

There have been 8 cases of pulmonary tuberculosis notified and 2 of non-pulmonary.

D. H. WALDRON,
Medical Officer of Health.

